CRESCENT NOISE
CHAPTER 3

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#MANGA-SECTION
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Chapter 3: The Murmuring Sound of Magic

NOBODY OUTSIDE THE KEKKAI CAN SEE OR HEAR ANYTHING THAT GOES ON INSIDE OF IT.
HE'S RAISED THE KINGDOM KEKKAI. LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE PLANNING TO FIGHT SERIOUSLY... EH, RAN?
THE SURFACE OF THE KEKKAI WILL REFLECT AN IMAGE OF THE NORMAL SURROUNDINGS.
IT'S ONE OF THE POWERS THAT THE VISITOR WHO SHAKES THE NIGHT CAN USE.
WHAT... WHAT HAPPENED, IGARASHI-SAN? WHAT'S A KEKKAI?
WE'RE NOW COMPLETELY TRAPPED IN THIS SPACE!
AS THE LITERAL WORDS INDICATE THE SPACE WITHIN THE KEKKAI IS THE NIGHT VISITOR'S KINGDOM. HE CAN DO WHATEVER HE WANTS.
POP!
POP
THEREFORE NO MATTER HOW STRONG AN ATTACK IS, THERE'D BE NO PROBLEM.
TO MAKE A LONG STORY SHORT, IF THINGS KEEP GOING AS THEY ARE, THERE'S NO WAY WE CAN GET OUT OF THIS SPACE RIGHT?

THERE'S NO USE IN WORRYING
ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS BEAT THE PERSON WHO SET RAISED THE KEKKAI.
I'M GOING TO ATTACK!
IGARASHI-SAN IS ALSO..
FLYING?

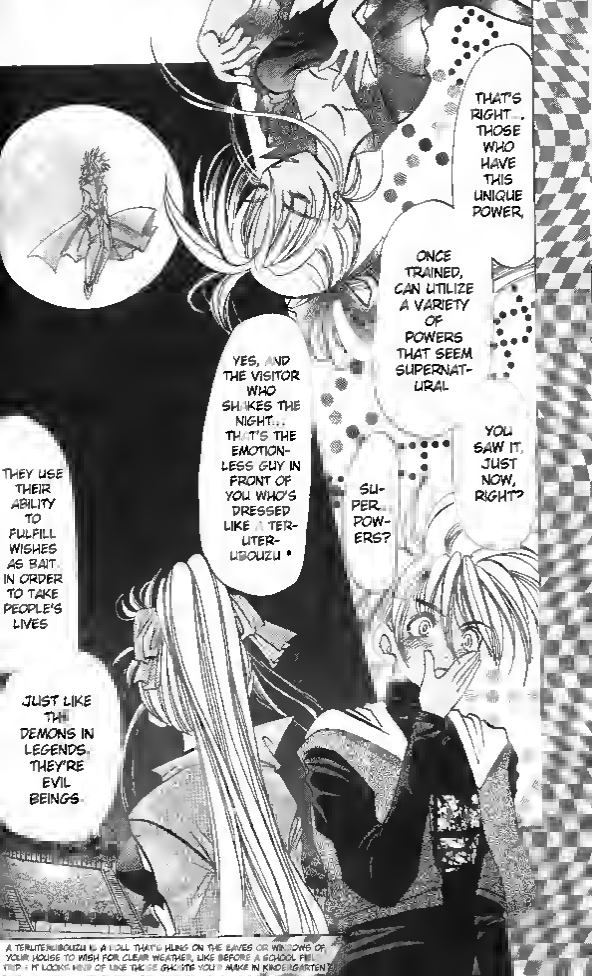
UNGH!

ドオ
IGA-SHI-SAN!
ARE YOU OK?
AAAA
THAT HURT... HE ACTUALLY TURNED MY ATTACK BACK ON ME!
YOU SHOULD AT LEAST USE YOUR OWN POWER TO LAUNCH AN ATTACK...
YOU CRAFTY BAST-ARD!
ドバ
!!

IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S TOO MUCH OF A BURDEN FOR THIS YOUNG LADY TO CHALLENGE ME ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS...
SO, YOUNG MAN, WHAT WILL YOU DO NOW?
ARE YOU SIMPLY GOING TO BE KILLED HERE WITHOUT ANY REASON
OR?
YOU... WHO ARE YOU?
ARE YOU A BAD GUY?

Think before you speak, Hasaki kun!
HOW INTER-EST-ING.
LOOKS LIKE YOU AND HIBIKI HAVEN'T YET TOLD HIM THE TRUTH
THIS YOUNG MAN DOESN'T ACTU-ALLY KNOW HOW TO USE THE POWER THAT IS SLEEPING WITHIN HIM. YET HE CAN HEAR MY VISI-TOR'S NOISE...
AND CAN EVEN UNDERSTAND WHAT I'M SAYING.
HE REALLY POS-SESSES EXCEL-LENT POTEN-TIAL, DON'T YOU THINK?
THOSE WHO INTERFERE WITH MY VISIT DESERVE DEATH
BUT BEFORE I KILL HIM, WOULDN'T IT BE BETTER TO EXPLAIN THINGS TO HIM?

HA-SAKI-KUN, LIS-TEN UP
WE'RE FACING EX-TREME DAN-GER.
SO I'LL MAKE THIS SHORT FIRST. YOU, ME AND HIBIKI ARE ALIKE, WE HAVE THE SAME KIND OF POWER...
WE ...
ARE THE SAME KIND?
WE CAN HEAR THE "SOUND OF THE SOUL" THAT REPRE-SENTS PEOPLE'S EMOTIONS AND THOUGHTS.
THAT IS TO SAY, WE'RE THE SAME KIND.


THAT'S RIGHT... THOSE WHO HAVE THIS UNIQUE POWER,
ONCE TRAINED, CAN UTILIZE A VARIETY OF POWERS THAT SEEM SUPERNATURAL
YOU SAW IT, JUST NOW, RIGHT?
SUPER-POWERS?
YES, AND THE VISITOR WHO SHUNNED THE NIGHT... THAT'S THE EMOTIONLESS GUY IN FRONT OF YOU WHO'S DRESSED LIKE A TERU-TERU-BOUZU.
THEY USE THEIR ABILITY TO FULFILL WISHES AS BAIT IN ORDER TO TAKE PEOPLE'S LIVES
JUST LIKE THE DEMONS IN LEGENDS. THEY'RE EVIL BEINGS.

A TERU-TERU-BOUZU IS A DOLL THAT'S HUNG ON THE EAVES OR WINDOWS OF YOUR HOUSE TO WISH FOR CLEAR WEATHER, LIKE BEFORE A SCHOOL FIELD TRIP. IT LOOKS KIND OF LIKE THOSE GHOSTS YOU'D MAKE IN KINDERGARTEN.

PEOPLE LIKE THEM ARE LIKE THE EVIL DEMONIC OVERLORDS IN IN RPG GAME.
HIBIKI AND I ARE LIKE THE NOBLE SORCERERS WHO FIGHT TO PROTECT OTHERS.

YOUR EXPLANATION IS PRETTY MUCH DEAD-ON ACCURATE
SO ARE YOU HAPPY NOW?
QUITE HAPPY! THANKS FOR THE COMPLIMENT!
IGARASHI-SAN!

SINCE IT'S SO RARE FOR EVERY-ONE TO BE IN SUCH AN EXCELLENT MOOD, LET ME DEMON-STRATE MY POWERS
!!
AH!
SUGI-SAKI-SAN!
THAT' S!

Sugisaki-san
SHE'S LOST ALL CONSCIOUSNESS.
IT'S NO USE. SHE CAN'T HEAR YOU!
SHE'S IN A HYPNOTIC STATE, CONTROLLED BY THE NIGHT VISITOR!
THAT HIBIKI WHERE THE HELL DID HE VANISH TO AT SUCH AN IMPORTANT TIME?
I BET HE'S OUT WITH SOME WOMEN RIGHT NOW.
DAMN IT. WE'RE AT A REAL DISADVANTAGE!
Tell me! What are you going to do to Sugisaki-san?
Why do this kind of thing?
WHY!

DIDN'T YOU LISTEN TO THE EXPLAIN-ATION?
I JUST CAME TO GRANT THIS YOUNG LADY'S WISH... THAT'S ALL.
AH, SO IT'S JUST A VISIT OUT OF THE KIND-NESS OF YOUR HEART?
PERHAPS YOUR METHODS ARE JUST A BIT TOO VIOLENT.

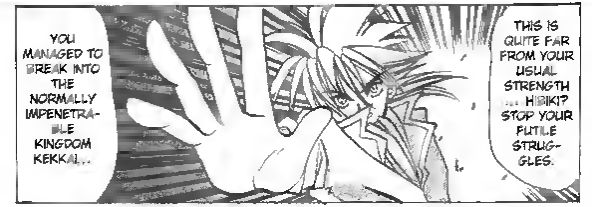
RAN!

HIBIKI-SENPAI!
MAN, YOU'RE SLOW!

はは…
はは…
YOU JUST CASUALLY DUMPED THIS MESS IN MY LAP — WHERE THE HELL WERE YOU?
SORRY!

I GOT DELAYED BECAUSE CLASS RAN LATE AT THE CRAM SCHOOL AND I COULDN'T GET OUT OF IT.
ALSO, I....

I'M ONE OF THOSE BRILLIANT THIRD-YEAR STUDENTS WHO ARE BUSY WITH THREE IMPORTANT THINGS
O MIGHTY SWORD THAT CONTROLS THE WINDS ...
WEAVE BEFORE ME THAT WHICH PROVIDES SAFETY
love, sports, and exams!
TWILIGHT'S WALL


YOU MANAGED TO BREAK INTO THE NORMALLY IMPENETRABLE KINGDOM KEKKAI...
THIS IS QUITE FAR FROM YOUR USUAL STRENGTH ... HIBIKI? STOP YOUR FUTILE STRUGGLES.

YOU ... ARE REALLY NOT EVEN A LITTLE BIT CUTE.
SNAP
IT PROBABLY SAPPED A LARGE AMOUNT OF YOUR STRENGTH

THAT GIRL FEELS VERY INSECURE ABOUT HER OWN FUTURE
CAN I ASK YOU ONE QUESTION? THE WISH YOU WANT TO HELP SUGISAKI HITOMI FULFILL...
SHE THINKS THAT IF HER PRESENT SELF IS SO WEAK...
SHE IS AFRAID THAT WHEN SHE BECOMES AN ADULT SHE WILL FAIL AT EVEN MORE RESPONSIBILITIES. SO SHE REFUSES TO GROW UP
WHAT IS THAT WISH?
SO THAT'S IT... THAT STRIKES DIRECTLY AT THE WEAKEST POINT FOR PEOPLE OUR AGE.
TO NOT WANT TO GROW UP...
AH, SO THAT MEANS AS LONG AS SHE NEVER REACHES THE FUTURE...

HIBIKI !
HOW ARE YOU GOING TO GRANT HER WISH?
THEN, GENTLE SIR VISITOR,
SNAP
SNAP
FOR YOU POWERLESS HUMANS.. THERE IS ONLY ONE WAY TO STOP TIME.
AND THAT IS.. TO STOP THE FLOW OF YOUR OWN TIMELINE.
IN OTHER WORDS
DIE !

!!
HI-
BIKI-
SENPAI
!

AT THAT TIME
SUGISAKI-SAN WAS BEING CONTROLLED BY HIM... MAYBE THAT WAS WHY SHE WAS STANDING ON THE LEDGE...
IF I HADN'T HELPED HER THEN... HER WISH WOULD HAVE BEEN GRANTED WHEN SHE JUMPED...
WHEN SHE WAS KILLED!

!!
IGA-RASHI-SAN!
IGA-RASHI-SAN!
OU-CHI-WIN, YOU'RE SO INCRE-DIB-LE
HIBI-KI-SEM-PAI!
YOU'VE SUCCESS-FULLY PRO-TECTED TAKU-CHAN YOU'RE JUST LIKE YAMATO NADESHIKO*
* REFERS TO THE IDEAL OF JAPA-NESE WOMAN-HOOD
IT LOOKS LIKE NEITHER GOOD OL' TRUSTWOR-THY HIBIKI NOR THAT LADY OVER THERE,
ARE IN ANY SHAPE TO CONTINUE THE BATTLE.

HER WISH WILL BE GRANTED IMMEDI-ATELY.
IF I LET HER FALL TO THE GROUND FROM HERE...
IF YOU WANT THIS SLEEPING BEAUTY TO WAKE UP,
YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN DO IT!
SO, NOW... WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, YOUNG MAN?

I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO CAN DO IT?
!?
YOU'RE JUST LIKE HIBIKI, YOU HAVE THE SAME AMOUNT OF POWER
IN HER HEART... BESIDES THE FEAR OF THE FUTURE AND DAILY LIFE,
IN THE DEEPEST PART OF HER HEART ONE CAN HEAR A VERY WEAK MELODY THAT IS PLAYING
DON'T TELL ME YOU CAN'T HEAR THE SOUND OF HER SOUL
!!
THAT MELODY, IS THE GENTLE LOVE SHE HOLDS FOR YOU

BECAUSE YOU CAN HEAR PEOPLE'S EMOTIONS THROUGH A SPECIAL SOUND,
YOU HATE IT, SO YOU PRETEND NOT TO HEAR ANYTHING, NOT TO KNOW ANYTHING.
YOU ARE AFRAID OF HURTING PEOPLE'S FEELINGS, SO YOU PUT PRESSURE ON YOURSELF.
YOU FAKE A SMILING, HAPPY FACE TO RESPOND TO PEOPLE.
IN FACT, THIS IS THE PHILOSOPHY FOR LIFE YOU'VE DEVELOPED THROUGH HARD WORK AND TEARS.

AND AFTER TODAY, ARE YOU GOING TO CONTINUE LIVING THIS PHILOSOPHY, COVERING UP YOUR EYES AND LIVING BLINDLY?
TAKU-CHAN ...
ハッ

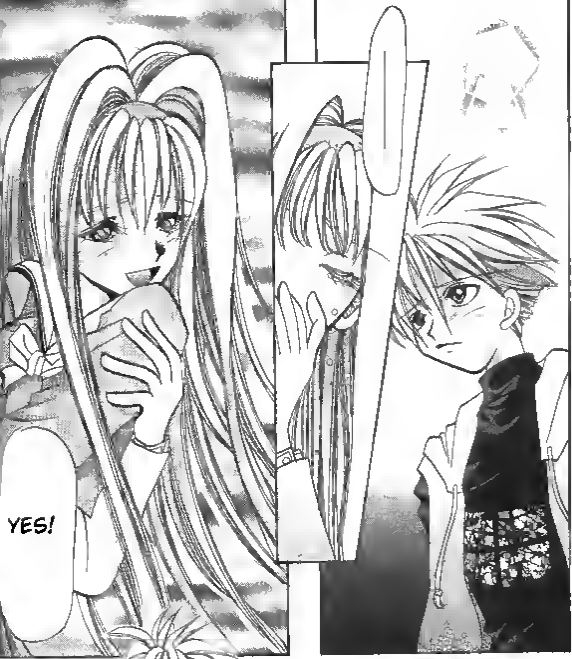
SUGI-
SAKI
-
SAN
!!
...
AH
...

HA ...
SAKI ... KUN ?
IMPOSSI-BLE.. SHE'S WAKING UP FROM THE HYPNOTIC STATE IMPOSED BY THE NIGHT VISITOR?
HE ONLY CRIED OUT ONCE ...
AND HE BROKE THE HYP-NOTIC CON-TROL?
SU GIS AKI - SA N
YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO IS AFRAID OF OR FEELS INSECURE ABOUT
THE PRESENT HIGH SCHOOL LIFE, OR THE FUTURE.
I... NO, EVERY-ONE IN SCHOOL FEELS THE SAME WAY

BECAUSE ALL OF US .
ARE ALL SIMILARLY WEAK BEINGS.
BUT... IT'S ALSO BECAUSE OF THAT,
THAT NONE OF US CAN LOSE.
WE CAN'T LOSE TO OUR WEAKNESS
OR TO THE DARKNESS INSIDE OF US!

DON'T WORRY... HIBIKI-SEMPAI AND I...
AND ALSO IGA-RASHI-SAN, WE'LL ALL BE BY YOUR SIDE.
ALL OF US... WE'RE DEFINITELY NOT ALONE.
DEFI-NITE-LY NOT!

I'M NOT ALONE ...
TRULY ?
SO... NO MATTER HOW SCARY THE FUTURE GETS, LET'S ALL FACE IT TOGETHER!
THE ONLY THING WE CAN DO NOW, IS TO FIND OUR COURAGE AND BELIEVE IN OUR OWN STRENGTH!


YES!

THAT'S ENOUGH
YOU WILL ONLY CONTINUE TO HATE YOUR ABILITIES— NO, YOUR WEAKNESSES
!?
YOU, WEAK HUMANS, CAN'T POSSIBLY CARVE OUT THE FUTURE.

AAAAAAAAHHHHH!!!

SU-GI-SA-KI-SAN?

OH NO! THERE'S NO TIME!

STOP

WHAT
?